

Montana State Legislature
1301 E. 6th Ave, Room 102
Helena, Montana

January 22, 2011

Pamela J. Davis
3009 Tina Ave.
Missoula, Montana 59808

To Whom It May Concern:

My name is Pam Davis. I am 56 years old and I live in the city of Missoula. I have been with Case Management since it first began 28 years ago. I was the first ventilator dependent quadriplegic that was able to use an HCBS waiver slot. Since the time I had my car accident and I have been able to live in my own home my life has been greatly enriched with the help of the waiver program. This program has allowed me to be very active and productive in the community with the help of 24 hour nursing care. This waiver program has helped to keep me out of the long term care facilities, which in turn has saved the state money in the long run. It has also given other members of the community a job with much needed health care benefits so that they too can be productive members and tax payers to our state.

It is my *hope* that there will be **NO CUTS** with this waiver slot program and any other health care programs but that the legislature will be able to recognize the long term benefits these programs give. With these programs and incentives we are healthier and more active and able to contribute back to our society

My cares are also provided by PCA's (personal care attendants) who work along with my nurses. These men and women, both nurses and PCA's, work very hard to give me the cares I need on a daily bases. Their wage right now averages \$10.00 per hour (depending on experience). This may **SOUND** like a lot of money but I see people struggle **DAILY** just to meet their immediate needs. Most of them have to work extra jobs, some of them up to 80 hour a **WEEK** (this is *not* a typing error) just to be able to provide for their families and make ends meet. PLEASE understand our situation and our struggles when it comes time for you to vote on these issues and **DO NOT** cut the funding for the "Health Care for Health Care Workers" benefits that are so desperately needed.

I also would like to speak to you about the Medicaid cuts that are on the table. With the previous cuts over the few past years my cares and supplies have been cut to the most minimal. I have had to pay for a lot of my supplies out of my own pocket and my income is not only minimal but very restricted i.e. Because of my disability I can only work very specific jobs in order to make money to cover all of my expenses. When employment is available, I work, thru Summit, as a peer advocate to help others transition from the long term care facilities to living on their own in the community. When my work is limited and my finances are at a minimum so are my supplies. I would like to tell you about a recent incident that happened to me. I have an indwelling suprapubic catheter that allows my bladder to drain off urine. This catheter came out during one of my transfers and because of the cut back on my supplies and the minimal amount of money I have to live on I did not have the needed supplies on hand to replace this catheter. My nurse was unable to replaced my catheter immediately the opening in my bladder had closed up and I needed to go to the emergency room and have the E.R. doctor reinsert a new one. I have also had to go to the urologist for 3 separate visits in order to get my catheter changed because the opening is so small and fragile it has to be done under a physicians care while it reopens. This whole incident has cost the state **AT LEAST 100** times the amount of money it would have cost if I was able to have the supplies I **NEED** in order to live.

I want to thank you for your time in reading my letter. Please help us keep what we do have in the means of benefits and supplies not only for myself but for my attendants and all the other struggling people in our community.

Sincerely,

Pamela J. Davis

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